

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
OF THE 4TH SPECIAL
TROOPS BATTALION

IMPORTANT TRAINING DATES

- **Block Leave!!**
20 June—4 July
- **Combat Lifesaver**
Medical Training
11-14 July
- **Small Arms &**
Reflexive Fire
Training
18—22 July
- **Convoy Live Fire**
Range
25—29 July
- **Pre-Training Brief**

1800, 26 July!!!
- **Company Lanes**
Training
3-20 August

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Griffon Herald

"The voice of your soldier as they get ready to deploy!"

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1



JUNE 15, 2005

Welcome to all - First Newsletter

Lieutenant Colonel Joe Gandara

I would like to welcome all of those who received this newsletter. As the Battalion Commander for the soldiers of the Special Troops Battalion, I wanted to start getting information out to all the Spouses, Parents, Relatives and Friends of the Soldiers of the "Griffon" Battalion. I will continue to use this mechanism as a conduit for getting information as we get your soldiers ready for deployment to Iraq. Furthermore, I will continue this newsletter on a regular basis once we are actually "in country" as a way of getting you first hand information on the soldiers, their mission, and what they are doing while deployed.

You can plan on receiving this newsletter on a regular basis in one or more formats. If you would like to get a paper copy through the mail, I will need your

postal information. I plan on getting that information through your soldier. This information will help my Rear Detachment Commander, Captain Nick Long, maintain contact with you while the battalion is deployed.



We also plan to send it out through e-mail, again important that Captain Long has your email address to make this happen.

Soon, we will have our Battalion Webpage on the internet, and will have information on how to get this newsletter from the

internet as well. Due to the sensitivity of the information we are publishing, and using the US Army official web system, we may have to place the newsletter on a public domain internet server, but that is still in the future. I wanted to take this opportunity to get you some information on how we are getting your soldier ready for the coming deployment.

Questions, suggestions and contact information can be forwarded to Captain Long at:

Nicholas.long@us.army.mil or
4th STB, 4th Brigade, 4th Inf Div
ATTN: Rear Detachment CDR
Bldg 10010
Ft Hood, TX 76544

Remember when...

Command Sergeant Major Anthony Walker

Hi to all, I am CSM Anthony K Walker the Battalion Command Sergeant Major of your soldier's Special Troops Battalion. As we jell together as a new Battalion, we will be conducting some new and rigorous training with all our soldiers as we prepare to deploy forward, to where ever our nation needs us, most likely Iraq.

In this first edition of the Griffon Herald, I welcome all family members to the Command and the Griffon Family. Like me, our soldiers have trained and will continue to train very hard (for many this will be their first combat experience). For some of us "Old Timers" a lot has changed. I'm not saying that in this chang-

ing world that we (in the Army) cannot adjust to change, we just don't like to change. So as we adjust to what we presently have, we become more centered on what has changed in our lives. One of the things I like to do to remind the "Newbie's" of the comfort we live in now is to ask them, "Do you remember when...?" Well, you might say, "What does that mean?" Let's try it out and you can tell a friend
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4th Special Troops Bn Activates

On 11 February, 2005, as part of the US Army reorganization, the 4th Special Troops Battalion was formed from the 104th Military Intelligence Battalion. In a ceremony attended by the 4th Infantry Division Commander, Major General James Thurman, Colonel Mike Beech passed the Battalion colors from Lieutenant Colonel Conrad Christman to Lieutenant Colonel Joe Gandara. As part of the ceremony, Christman encased the battalion colors of the 104th Military Intelligence Battalion, symbolizing the Battalion no longer exists as a

unit. Immediately after casing the 104th colors, Acting Command Sergeant Major Jimmie Williams uncased the colors for the 4th Special Troops Battalion, signifying activation of the new battalion. Colonel Beech, the 4th Brigade Commander, then presided over the passing of the colors, a ceremony that signifies the passing of responsibility between the outgoing and incoming battalion commander.

The activation ceremony is a small part of the US Army's transi-

tion to a new, more modular Brigade Combat Team structure that will make deploying to fight less cumbersome than with the previous Division based structure.



Special Troops Battalion Colors



COL Michael Beech passes the STB Colors to LTC Joe Gandara during the Battalion activation ceremony

New Special Troops Battalion Structure

The Battalion is composed of a very diverse group of soldiers. In addition to the Commander and staff of the battalion headquarters, the battalion has three companies. A Headquarters Company (HHC) consisting of a Military Police Platoon, a Chemical Reconnaissance Platoon, a Maintenance Platoon, and a Support Platoon, consisting of

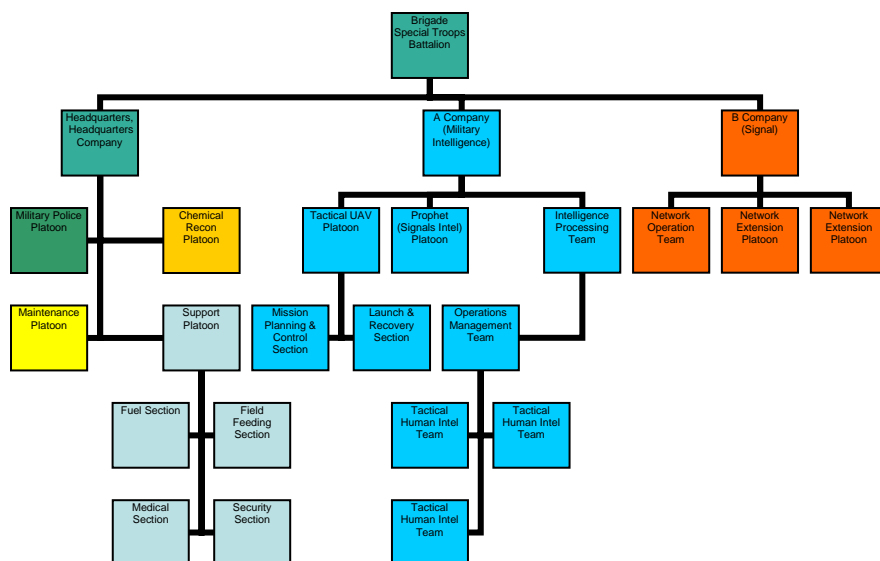
a Fuel Section, a Field Feeding Section, a Medical Section, and a Security Section.

A Company is the Multi functional Military Intelligence Company, consisting of a Tactical Unmanned Vehicle Platoon, a Signals Intelligence Platoon, a Human Intelligence section, an Intelligence Processing Team, an Intelligence Maintenance

Section and an Operations Management Team.

B Company is a Signal Network Support Company, which has 2 extension platoons, a signal maintenance section, a Network Operations Team, Signal Retransmission Teams, and several small advanced communications support teams.

The Brigade Special Troops Battalion has a unique structure that has never been used before. Eventually each of the 48 new Brigade Combat Teams will have a STB.



Digital Convoy Training

Pvt. Amie Engel-Renard Original Article from the Fort Hood Herald

Soldiers with Company B, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, conducted a daylong digital convoy training event Feb. 23 at the Warrior Skills Trainer center here.

The training, designed to simulate various combat convoy missions, is part of a total training program designed to better prepare STB, 4th BCT Soldiers for eventual deployment to Iraq.

"It's all-encompassing, progressive training for deployment-type, in-theater operations," said Capt. Jeremy Sereno, commander, Co. B, STB, 4th BCT, 4th Infantry Division.



A Soldier prepares to engage a target as his Vehicle Commander keeps the convoy together.

The unit began training last month, beginning with the basics before tackling the digital training, said Sereno. Eventual convoy live fires and platoon lane certifications are tentatively scheduled for early this summer. Convoy simulations are just one step in this process.

"We built up to using the convoy simulator, driving around and testing the skills we've learned," said Sereno.

The WST is part of the larger Battle Command Training Center and is one of many digital and simulated training programs available here. The digital convoy trainer is a safe, low-overhead method to train Soldiers before they conduct live fires down range, said Georgie McAteer, chief, BCT branch, III Corps.

"No one gets hurt, so it's a safe way to do it," she said, "and when it's over, you haven't spent anything more than time."

The trainer simulates a variety of different

situations and features 14 basic scenarios that can be paired up at the commander's discretion to tailor the program for a unit's specific needs.

This flexibility allows for more personalized training, said Jay Ritz, lead trainer, WST.

"We provide the tools, and the commanders decide where to go from there," Ritz said. "It allows units to hone their skills before putting them to test at the range."

The training equipment consists of four mock humvees in a convoy. Screens in front of, and surrounding, the convoy feature a virtual landscape, with people, cars and other possible threats trainees must analyze and monitor to safely complete the



B Company Soldiers engage targets from humvee mockups.

mission.

Communication between vehicles is done through a headset worn by the traffic controller in the passenger seat. This allows vehicles to better evaluate surroundings and recognize dangerous persons or items.

"The training covers how to react to contact, react to fire, react to an improvised explosive device (IED) – basically all convoy operations," said Sereno.

Reacting appropriately to an IED is especially important as these devices can and be difficult to recognize in a combat situation. Sereno said Soldiers are briefed about IEDs before beginning the training, including what to do if a possible IED is spotted.

"Most IEDs you'll never see. It could be a pile of rocks, an oil can – even stuffed inside a dead animal," said Sereno. "You're looking for suspicious objects placed close to the road."

If a Soldier is fairly certain an IED is pre-

sent, he is instructed to close off the area and notify explosive ordnance personnel to properly dispose of the device.

"You don't want to approach it and try to dismantle it yourself," Sereno said.

Co. B. Soldiers are members of a signal company and provide communications for the 4th BCT. Some Soldiers may be on a convoy team in Iraq, so this training is an important part of deployment preparation, said Sgt. Allen Duran, cable systems installer, Co. B.

"In Iraq, we made the initial movement north from Kuwait and this training would have helped us prepare for that," Duran said. "This time it can help Soldiers with the primary mission – keeping the lanes of communication open."

The digital convoy training is a way to incorporate practical training while allowing the Soldiers to have some fun, said McAteer. She said overall feedback has been positive, a sentiment that was echoed by participants.

"I loved it," said Pvt. 1st Class Jordan Rohe. "It was realistic and probably the most practical for what we're going to face in Iraq."

"This gives us some good training in communication and the surprises we may face," he said.



Captain Jeremy Sereno, B Company Commander, reviews the lessons that each convoy learned during the After Action Review.

"It was realistic and probably the most practical for what we're going to face in Iraq."

Official Newsletter of the 4th Special Troops Battalion

Congratulations to the following:

Promotions:

Staff Sergeant Brad Fletcher, A Co
Staff Sergeant Michael Stanley, B Co
Sergeant Uriah Hong, A Co
Sergeant Tracey Mathews, HQ Company
Sergeant Jesse Moore, B Company
Sergeant Andrea Zimmerman, A Company
Specialist Benjamin Allen, A Co
Specialist Timothy Conrad, B Co
Specialist Jeremy Forsyth, A Co
Private First Class Laura Bloom, B Co
Private First Class Donald Bokor, A Co
Private First Class Douglas Boswell, B Co
Private First Class Nathaniel Cameron, A Co
Private First Class Evan Carraway, A Co
Private First Class Terrenca Curren, HHC

Private First Class Robert Evans, HHC
Private First Class Tolessa Gurmessu, HHC
Private First Class Krystal High, HHC
Private First Class Nicholas Hoffman, HHC
Private First Class Jason King, HHC
Private First Class Jeremiah Leydig, HHC
Private First Class Joshua Martin, B Co
Private First Class Antonio Martinez, HHC
Private First Class Mathew Meshell, HHC
Private First Class Mayra Montelongo, HHC
Private First Class Sean Mullins, B Co
Private First Class Renecia Roberts, HHC
Private First Class Mathew Schroeder, B Co
Private First Class Adam White, A Co

Bn Contact Information

Our Mailing address

4th STB, 4th BCT, 4th ID
Bldg 10010
Ft. Hood, Tx 76544

**"THE
GRIFT"**



Special Recognition to:

**SPC Hal Purka, A Co
SELECTED for Officer
Candidate School**

AND

**SSG Jacoby from HHC
SELECTED for Warrant
Officer School**

You can also get this newsletter on the Web at <http://www.hood.army.mil/4id/division/content/units.asp>

Remember When (Con't)

if it eases your mind (about *your* soldier's quality of life). You can add your own memories into your own "Do you remember when..." story.

1. Remember when a (mailed) letter was all you could expect to receive from your loved one? Now a cell phone is right with in reach.
2. Remember when MRE's were called "C" rations?
3. Remember when sending coffee, soap, and kool-aid was a hot item during any deployment.
4. Remember when duffle bags were (kept) packed and there was no such thing as a notification alert? Or a Deployment rotation and timeline.
5. Remember when BUD's, DCU's and ACU's were just called fatigues?
6. Remember when the head gear was the Soft Cap instead of the Beret?

7. Remember when training started at O dark 30?
8. Remember when even combat TV news was 7 days late?
9. Remember when you didn't know your soldiers' financial problems?

Last one: Remember when no one knew the advantages of having a strong Family Readiness Group?

By knowing that our Family Readiness Group is strong and that things are going well at home our soldiers will not only perform their crafts extremely well, they will maintain a sense of pride in all that they accomplish. Remember, home is where the heart is for all.

Please contact the FRG leader for your company, or your soldiers company.

Family Readiness Leaders Contact Information

HHC

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OR
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